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REMARKS

Applicant submits that new claims 39-62 should be examined along with the election of Group II in the response of March 28, 2002.

All pending claims 1-62 are believed to be in condition for allowance, and a Notice of Allowability is therefore earnestly solicited.

Attached hereto is a marked-up version of the changes made to the specification and claims by the current amendment. The attached page is captioned "Version With Markings to Show Changes Made."

Respectfully submitted,

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5/7/02  
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VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE

In the Claims:

Claims 1-38 have been amended as follows.

1. (Amended) A [dough divider] food press comprising:  
a hopper with a lid, the lid having an open position and a closed position;  
a latch assembly adapted to maintain the lid in the closed position when activated and to discontinue maintaining the lid in the closed position when deactivated;  
a press plate vertically slidable within the hopper;  
the hopper being adapted to accept [dough] food between the lid and the press plate;  
the press plate adapted to be driven towards the lid in order to compress the [dough] food between the press plate and the lid within the hopper; and  
wherein the latch assembly automatically activates to maintain the lid in the closed position while the press plate is being driven towards the lid.
2. (Amended) The [dough divider] food press of claim 1, further including:  
a delay device configured to delay the driving of the press plate towards the lid such that the latch assembly is activated a predetermined amount of time before the press plate is driven towards the lid.
3. (Amended) The [dough divider] food press of claim 1, wherein:  
the press plate has a vertical stroke between a top of the hopper and a bottom of the hopper; and  
the press plate is configured to move towards the bottom of the hopper when the pressure applied to a top of the press plate from the [dough] food within the hopper reaches a predetermined level.

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4. (Amended) The [dough divider] food press of claim 3, wherein:  
the predetermined level is an amount of force greater than an amount of friction between the hopper and the press plate.
5. (Amended) The [dough divider] food press of claim 3, further including:  
a reversible cylinder assembly configured to move the press plate between the top of the hopper and the bottom of the hopper.
6. (Twice Amended) The [dough divider] food press of claim 5, wherein:  
the reversible cylinder assembly is adapted to move downward in order to allow the press plate to move towards the bottom of the hopper when the pressure applied to the top of the press plate from the [dough] food when the hopper reaches the predetermined level.
7. (Amended) The [dough divider] food press of claim 6, further comprising:  
a knife assembly adapted to protrude through the press plate and divide the [dough] food into an equal number of pieces.
8. (Amended) The [dough divider] food press of claim 7, wherein:  
the cylinder assembly includes a first rod telescoping with a second rod;  
the first rod being connected to the press plate and the second rod being connected to the knife assembly.
9. (Amended) The [dough divider] food press of claim 1, wherein:  
the lid is rotatably connected to the hopper and adapted to compress the [dough] food within the hopper.
10. (Amended) The [dough divider] food press of claim 1, further comprising:  
a knife assembly adapted to protrude through the press plate and divide the [dough] food into an equal number of pieces.

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11. (Amended) The [dough divider] food press of claim 10, wherein:  
the knife assembly is configured to divide the [dough] food into 16 pieces.
  12. (Amended) The [dough divider] food press of claim 10, wherein:  
the knife assembly is configured to divide the [dough] food into 20 pieces.
  13. (Amended) The [dough divider] food press of claim 10, wherein:  
the knife assembly is configured to divide the [dough] food into 24 pieces.
  14. (Amended) The [dough divider] food press of claim 1, further comprising:  
a hydraulic assembly adapted to drive the press plate towards the lid.
  15. (Amended) The [dough divider] food press of claim 14, wherein:  
the hydraulic assembly is further adapted to activate the latch assembly.
  16. (Amended) The [dough divider] food press of claim 15, wherein:  
the latch assembly automatically deactivates when the latch assembly is not activated by  
the hydraulic assembly.
  17. (Amended) The [dough divider] food press of claim 1, further comprising:  
a reversible cylinder assembly being connected to the press plate and adapted to move  
downward in order to allow the press plate to move towards a bottom of the hopper when  
pressure applied to a top of the press plate from rising [dough] food when the hopper reaches a  
predetermined level.
  18. (Amended) A [dough divider] food press comprising:  
a hopper with a lid, the lid having an open position and a closed position;  
a latch assembly adapted to maintain the lid in the closed position when activated and to  
discontinue maintaining the lid in the closed position when deactivated;

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23. (Amended) The [dough divider] food press of claim 22, further comprising:  
a knife assembly adapted to protrude through the press plate and divide the [dough]  
food into an equal number of pieces.
24. (Amended) The [dough divider] food press of claim 23, wherein:  
the cylinder assembly includes a first rod telescoping with a second rod; the first rod  
being connected to the press plate and the second rod being connected to the knife assembly.
25. (Amended) The [dough divider] food press of claim 18, wherein:  
the lid is rotatably connected to the hopper and adapted to compress the [dough] food  
within the hopper in the closed position.
26. (Amended) The [dough divider] food press of claim 25, wherein:  
a coil spring connected to the lid automatically rotates the lid to the open position when  
the latch assembly is deactivated.
27. (Amended) The [dough divider] food press of claim 18, further comprising:  
a knife assembly adapted to protrude through the press plate and divide the [dough]  
food into an equal number of pieces.
28. (Amended) The [dough divider] food press of claim 27, wherein:  
the knife assembly is configured to divide the [dough] food into 16 pieces.
29. (Amended) The [dough divider] food press of claim 27, wherein:  
the knife assembly is configured to divide the [dough] food into 20 pieces.
30. (Amended) The [dough divider] food press of claim 27, wherein:  
the knife assembly is configured to divide the [dough] food into 24 pieces.

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31. (Amended) The [dough divider] food press of claim 18, further comprising:  
a hydraulic assembly adapted to drive the press plate towards the lid.
32. (Amended) The [dough divider] food press of claim 31, wherein:  
the hydraulic assembly is further adapted to activate the latch assembly.
33. (Amended) The [dough divider] food press of claim 18, further comprising:  
a reversible cylinder assembly being connected to the press plate and adapted to move downward in order to allow the press plate to move towards a bottom of the hopper when pressure applied to a top of the press plate from rising [dough] food within the hopper reaches a predetermined level.
34. (Amended) The [dough divider] food press of claim 18, further comprising:  
an actuating mechanism for driving the press plate towards the lid when activated;  
wherein the latch mechanism is automatically deactivated to discontinue maintaining the lid in the closed position when the actuating mechanism is not activated.
35. (Amended) The [dough divider] food press of claim 3, further including:  
a delay device configured to delay the driving of the press plate towards the lid such that the latch assembly is activated a predetermined amount of time before the press plate is driven towards the lid.
36. (Amended) The [dough divider] food press of claim 3, wherein:  
the lid is rotatably connected to the hopper and adapted to compress the [dough] food within the hopper.
37. (Amended) The [dough divider] food press of claim 19, wherein:  
the lid is rotatably connected to the hopper and adapted to compress the [dough] food within the hopper in the closed position.

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38. (Amended) The [dough divider] food press of claim 37, wherein:  
a coil spring connected to the lid automatically rotates the lid to the open position when  
the latch assembly is deactivated.